



It's great to be back!

Our new ADFAS year has swung into action with Jenny Bowker's lecture on ***The Tent Makers of Cairo*** and a packed response to Susannah Fullerton and her talk on ***The Mitford Girls***.

We also teamed up with ADFAS Canberra to undertake our first ***Special Interest Morning*** where quilt historian Annette Gero entertained seventy of us with her lecture and show-and-tell about the role of quilts and quilt-making in Australia, from colonial times to mid 20th century.

Many favourable comments have been received about the comfortable cabaret-style seating arrangements and ambience of the occasion.



Susannah Fullerton wowed the audience with her tales of the aristocratic Mitfords.



Dr Annette Gero presented a fascinating glimpse into our social history – through quilts!

Message from the Chair, April 2022



Our 2022 series of lectures started well in March, with a fascinating lecture on The Tent Makers of Old Cairo by Jenny Bowker. Jenny is well placed to lecture on this subject. She has lived in Egypt and also visited many times subsequently. She has built a warm relationship with the wonderfully skilled tentmakers from the back streets of Cairo to the extent that she has previously brought them to Australia for exhibitions of their work.

Our next presentation on 12 April was a first for Molonglo Plains, a **Special Interest Morning**. We combined forces with ADFAS Canberra for this event and were pleased with the response from both our societies. The session consisted of two hours of detailed lectures with refreshments in between. Our guest lecturer was **Dr Annette Gero**, a world-recognised expert on the history of quilts and her subject was Australia's Quilt Heritage from Colonial Times to 1960.

Hard on the heels of this session was our second regular lecture by the wonderful **Susannah Fullerton**. Susannah has a prodigious range of literary subjects and entertained us with "**Those Mitford Girls**", a comprehensive examination of that dysfunctional but brilliant family. The rest of the ADFAS year looks exciting. Membership has grown to comfortable levels. Because the Pandemic meant we were again unable to bring UK lecturers to our shores, we have all- Australian speakers this year who are experts in their fields and will present a marvellously varied range of topics.

Parking in the Hall precinct unfortunately remains challenging as large building works proceed around it. I do apologise for this annoying situation and expect that we will see a resolution to this problem by the end of the year!

Next year we have contracted lecturers from **The Arts Society** in the UK again so will be welcoming those along with a good selection of Australian speakers. All sessions will be held in the Queanbeyan Bicentennial Hall and I do look forward to seeing you there.

Regards,
Lucy

Interested in how ADFAS Molonglo Plains works? Like to be part of the process of choosing lecturers and events?

Then, please, join our Committee – we can always use extra brains and hands!



Our winter program: coming up . . .our May 19 lecture:

Ian Fairweather – An Artist Scholar Before His Time

Ian Fairweather (1891-1974) is a much-loved Australian artist who created a distinct style of modern art during his lifetime. His life as a so-called hermit has overshadowed his scholarly background in studying art at London's Slade School whilst also studying Japanese and Chinese at the University of London, and then learning Mandarin and calligraphy whilst living in China, and Aboriginal rock art whilst living in northern Australia. Fairweather was also widely travelled around the world. This lecture looks closely at his artworks to understand how this 'international intelligence' informs Fairweather's art and how his international perspective was well before its time.

Our Lecturer: Sally Butler

Sally Butler is Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Queensland and formerly a Senior Education Officer at the Queensland Art Gallery and an Associate Editor and feature writer for *Art Collector* magazine. She has published widely in Australian and international journals and several books.



Sally is the author and curator of the 2007 publication and international touring exhibition titled *Our Way, Contemporary Aboriginal Art from Lockhart River* and is one of the editors of the *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Art*. She was editor of the book *Fully Exploited Labour, Pat Hoffie*, 2008 and author of a book chapter on the Arnhem Land artist *John Mawurndjul*. She is also a former Associate Editor of *Australian Art Collector Magazine*.

And then, on June 16 we have . . .

Poetry and Place: Words, Nature and Landscape Emerging into Visual Art

Canberra is designed to be a city in the landscape and its beauty is meant to be experienced. Firth is a landscape architect and textile artist, and landscape inspires her art. But how do artists working in different media, such as poetry, respond to the experience of nature and landscape in Canberra? To test this question Firth invited local and international poets visiting Canberra for a poetry festival to write poetry that captured an aspect of their experience of nature and landscape in Canberra. In response, Firth turned their poems into visual art for an exhibition at the Belconnen Arts Centre in 2017.

In this presentation you will hear some of the poems from 7 Australian and 7 international poets, see Firth's visual response to them, and engage with the process.

Our Lecturer: Dr Dianne Firth OAM

Dianne is a landscape architect, academic and artist. Although educated as a landscape architect Dianne had early training with textiles at Newcastle Technical College and Glasgow Art School. She discovered quilting after seeing a collection of Amish quilts at the National Gallery of Victoria in the early 1980s and undertaking a master class with American art quilter Nancy Crow.



She is Adjunct Associate Professor in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra, Deputy Chairperson of the ACT Heritage Council, Fellow of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects; accredited member of Craft ACT; member of ACT Quilters, the Quilters Guild of NSW and Ozquilt Network Inc. Dianne advises the ACT Government on issues related to landscape heritage, trees and urban design. She was awarded an Order of Australian Medal for her services to Landscape Architecture and to Education in 2017.

She is recognized nationally and internationally for her textile art. Her works have been selected for public and private collections including the Museum of Art and Design in New York, the National Gallery of Australian and Canberra Museum and Gallery.

Then on July 21 put on your glad rags for ...

Dressing Sydney- the Jewish Fashion Story

Thousands of Jewish migrants fled Nazism and many arrived in Australia in the 1930s and '40s. A large number proceeded to work in the clothing and appearance industries, also known as the 'rag trade'. Many worked out of necessity but others brought entrepreneurial knowledge from Europe. Many prospered and others laboured hard, some failing. Learn how Australia acquired high quality knitwear via Vienna. How an attempt was made to refocus our wool industry. How new casual separates, textiles and colours emerged. How the clothing traders diversified into other businesses, from wine to real estate. How a whole working-class district – Surry Hills - was remade between the wars then transformed again in the 1980s as our economy was restructured. The focus is Sydney and the subplot is 'Dressing Sydney: The Jewish Fashion Story' – learn how this writer teamed with the Sydney Jewish Museum to create an award-winning experience in 2012.

Our Lecturer: Dr Peter McNeil

Dr Peter McNeil FAHA is Distinguished Professor of Design History at UTS. From 2008-18 he lived and worked in three countries, being Foundation Professor of Fashion Studies in Sweden and Academy of Finland Distinguished Professor, Helsinki. His acclaimed book 'Pretty Gentlemen', on Macaroni Men and the 18th century fashion world, was published with Yale University Press in 2018. He was the main writer for Los Angeles County Museum of Art's travelling exhibition 'Reigning Men' (2016-18) and has worked with communities and museums around the world. The award-winning Australian shows include 'Dressing Sydney' (2012-13) with the Sydney Jewish Museum and The 'Unflinching Gaze' (2017) with Bathurst Regional Art Gallery. He is Past President (2006-10) of the Art Association of Australia and New Zealand, representing Art History and Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. He lives in Sydney and Bathurst.



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